

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

1. (Currently Amended) A composition for ~~preventing or~~ alleviating symptoms associated with varicose veins of lower extremities wherein the composition contains eicosapentaenoic acid, with the proviso that the composition does not contain any one of elements selected from the group consisting of phospholipids, compounds which are a factor in methionine metabolism, and 10-40% by weight of antioxidant/reducing vitamins or provitamins.

2. (Currently Amended) The composition according to claim 1 wherein the composition is a food, a dietary ~~supplement~~ supplement, a cosmetic, or a quasi drug.

3. (Currently Amended) A ~~prophylactic and~~ therapeutic agent for varicose veins of lower extremities which contains eicosapentaenoic acid as its effective component, with the proviso that the composition does not contain any one of elements selected from the group consisting of phospholipids, compounds which are a factor in methionine metabolism, and 10-40% by weight of antioxidant/reducing vitamins or provitamins.

4. (Currently Amended) The ~~prophylactic and~~ therapeutic agent for varicose veins of lower extremities according to claim 3 wherein the effective component is ethyl ester of the eicosapentaenoic acid.

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Currently Amended) A method for ~~preventing and~~ treating varicose veins of lower extremities ~~by using~~ comprising:

orally administering to a patient a therapeutic agent according to claim 3, which is in a form for oral administration and contains eicosapentaenoic acid as a dose of 0.1 to 9g per day.

7. (New) A method for treating varicose veins of lower extremities comprising administering, to a patient in need thereof, a composition comprising an effective amount of one or more components selected from the group consisting of eicosapentaenoic acid, a salt thereof and an ester thereof (collectively referred to as “the EPA component”).

8. (New) The method according to claim 7, wherein the EPA component is incorporated into a food, a dietary supplement, a cosmetic, or a quasi drug which is then administered to said patient.

9. (New) The method according to claim 7, wherein the EPA component comprises an effective amount of eicosapentaenoic acid ethyl ester.

10. (New) A composition for alleviating symptoms associated with varicose veins of lower extremities wherein the composition consists essentially of eicosapentaenoic acid and an additive selected from the group consisting of food, a dietary supplement, a cosmetic, or a quasi drug.

11. (New) A therapeutic agent for varicose veins of lower extremities which consists essentially of eicosapentaenoic acid as its effective component and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.